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UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

FEDERAL PERSONNEL MANUAL SYSTEM

LETTER

Washington, D.C. 20415

February 2, 1971

FPM LETTER NO. 530-157

Supersedes and cancels FPM Letter 530-156

SUBJECT: Adjustment of Special Minimum Rates and Rate Ranges Established
Under 5 U.S.C. 5303, Based on Annual Review

Heads of Departments and Independent Establishments:

1. This FPM letter places into effect the results of the 1970 annual review of special salary rate schedules established by the Commission under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 5303 and Executive Order 11073. The annual review is required by Executive Order 11073, and serves as the basis for determining which special schedules will be continued, and which schedules will be adjusted up or down. Based on the annual review, the Commission has determined that the special minimum rates and rate ranges currently in effect will be adjusted as set forth in the attachment to this letter.

2. The new rate ranges, either special or regular as appropriate, will be effective the first day of the first pay period that begins on or after January 31, 1971. If there is no special rate range shown for a grade or grades that previously had a special range, or if a location for which special rates were authorized previously is not listed in the attachment, the regular rates apply.

3. The pay of employees on the rolls will be converted to the new special or regular rate ranges in accordance with the following instructions:

a. Where the new special minimum rate is higher in dollar amount than the superseded special minimum rate. Employees affected by this situation will be converted to the new special rate range in accordance with section 530.305 of the Commission's regulations. This section provides instructions regarding several types of personnel actions; however, for simple conversion to the new rates, section 530.305(a)(1) applies and the applicable part reads as follows:

"... when an employee is in a position to which a special rate range becomes applicable, the department or agency shall fix his rate in the special rate range at the numerical rank in the special rate range for his grade or level which corresponds to his existing numerical rank in the rate range for his grade or level."

Leave and Special Pay Policy Section, Bureau of Policies and Standards
INQUIRIES: Code 101, Ext. 25604 or 63-25604

CSC CODE 530, Pay Rates and Systems (General)

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To illustrate the effect of 530.305(a)(1), the adjustment for certain Occupational and Physical Therapist positions in New York City and Suffolk County, New York (Table No. 310) is used: An employee in the third step rate of the superseded GS-7 special rate range immediately before the effective date will remain in the third step rate of the new special rate range on the effective date, and his salary will be increased from \$10,012 to \$10,584.

b. Where the new special or regular minimum rate is lower in dollar amount than the superseded special minimum rate. Employees in this situation will be converted to the new special or regular rate range under the provisions of section 303 of Executive Order 11073, and in line with the rules contained in section 530.306 of the Commission's regulations. These provisions assure that no employee shall have his pay reduced because of the downward adjustment or discontinuation of special salary rates. The following illustrates the effect of these provisions:

(1) The new GS-4 special minimum rate for the Guard Series in Washington D. C., is lower than the superseded special minimum rate for this grade (Table No. 007). An employee in the first step rate of the superseded GS-4 special rate range and paid \$7,858, immediately before the effective date, will retain the same pay rate on the effective date, and will be placed in the third step rate of the new special rate range.

(2) The special rates are discontinued at GS-11 for all professional series in the GS-800 Engineering and Architecture Group (Table No. 410). An employee in the seventh step of the discontinued GS-11 special rate range and paid \$16,825, immediately before the effective date, will retain the same pay rate on the effective date, and will be placed in a "saved pay" status. This is because the regular GS-11 maximum rate (tenth step) of \$16,404, is less than the employee's current rate, and no employee's salary may be reduced when special rates are discontinued.

4. Explaining Rate Adjustments to Affected Employees

a. Departments and agencies are urged to take appropriate steps to assure that employees who are paid special rates, established under 5 U.S.C. 5303, become familiar with the basis for these higher rates, and the possible adjustments which may be made to them.

The special rates are regularly reviewed by the Commission, and they may be continued at the same level, or they may be changed up or down, or even canceled at any time, if the recruitment/retention situation and/or non-Federal salaries change significantly.

b. The Commission's primary concern in administering the special rate authority, and in establishing and adjusting special rates, is to assure that the Government's salary levels are not a hindrance to agencies in recruiting and retaining their fair share of well-qualified persons to staff their facilities. It must be emphasized that special rates are governed by conditions in the labor market and the facts and circumstances of the staffing situation in the departments and agencies. The special rates, as shown in the attachment to this letter, are based on a thorough and careful analysis of labor market factors and agency staffing needs. Where warranted under the criteria outlined in 5 U.S.C. 5303, some special rates have been increased, and on the same basis, other special rates have been reduced or discontinued.

5. Reporting Personnel Actions

a. When an employee's step rate only is changed because of the elimination or downward adjustment of a special salary rate schedule, the personnel action will be processed as 899 Step-Rate Change. Actions may be reported individually on forms SF 50 or SF 1126 (or equivalent) or, as a mass listing. If a list is used instead of individual forms, FPM supplement 296-31, table 6 should be consulted in preparing the list form. Table 7 of the same supplement provides instructions on reporting the actions to the Commission. A reference to FPM Letter No. 530-157 dated February 2, 1971 should be entered under Remarks on the personnel actions.

b. If a special rate schedule is discontinued or reduced and, as a result, an employee's existing rate is higher than the maximum rate authorized for his position and grade, the salary rate shown on the "To" side or in the "New Salary" box on the personnel action will be followed parenthetically by the term "Saved Rate." Also a reference should be made under Remarks to "CSC regulation 530.306."

Nicholas J. Oganovic

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Executive Director

Attachment

1. This attachment contains the basic salary rate information for each occupation and grade level for which special rates are currently authorized.
2. The columns on the pages that follow identify:
 - a. Specific occupational series coverage by series code and title;
 - b. The geographic coverage; *
 - c. Grade or grade levels covered;
 - d. The special minimum rate, identified as "1st Step Rate";
 - e. The special maximum rate, identified as "10th Step Rate" for General Schedule occupations.
 - f. The amount of the within grade increase;
 - g. The effective date which will be the first day of the pay period that starts on or after the date shown.
3. The full range of special rates for each grade can be prepared by successively adding the amount of the within-grade increase, as shown for each grade, beginning with the special minimum rate, to produce a rate for each step up to the special maximum rate. To illustrate, the Electronic Engineer, GS-855-9, situation is used:

(The special minimum (i.e., 1st step rate) is \$11,517; the special maximum (i.e., 10th step rate) is \$14,658; and the amount of the within-grade increase is \$349 a year.)

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
\$11,517	\$11,866	\$12,215	\$12,564	\$12,913	\$13,262	\$13,611	\$13,960	\$14,309	\$14,658

This procedure is to be followed in preparing a full schedule of special rates for each occupation and grade level listed in Attachment 1. As an aid to preparing the various schedules, Attachment 2 contains a comprehensive table which shows the correct dollar amount for each possible step for each GS grade which may be used in the various special schedules. By locating the special minimum rate and special maximum rate on these tables the full range of authorized rates is readily identified.

* Where cited, SMSA means the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.

Note: (Table numbers are provided for use by agencies in data processing systems.)

GS-500 Accounting and Budget Group

(5)

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